

RESEARCH ARTICLE



INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA

2395-2636 (Print);2321-3108 (online)

## ENGLISH TEACHING DIFFICULTIES IN A LARGE CLASS ROOM

NALLALA HIMA VARSHINI<sup>1</sup>, Dr.RAJA AMBETHKAR<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research scholar Dept. English K.L university

<sup>2</sup>Research Supervisor, PhD Assoc.prof. K.L university,AP.India.



NALLALA HIMA  
VARSHINI

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to enumerate various difficulties faced by English language teachers while teaching in a large class room. Teaching English as a second language (in Telugu states it is 3<sup>rd</sup> language) in a large classroom is not a mean task. Teaching targets are not reached as many activities prescribed to improve Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW) cannot be taught to the students, owing to paucity of time in a large classroom. Aim of teaching English is to make learn the students the four skills i.e., LSRW

In the present scenario, such four skills are extremely necessary to the students to thrive in an ultra competitive world where impeccable language skills are a must.

Listening is an initial step in the process of learning. Improper listening will have a telling impact on reading. If reading is faulty, one can never understand the spellings, pronunciation, accent and intonation. It ultimately influences speaking and writing skills. One can not have enough confidence to either read or speak out certain words without clarity over its pronunciation.

Therefore the English teacher will have greater responsibility to teach all these skills to the students and evaluate them individually. In a large class room this poses even greater difficulties.

**Key words:** large class room, teaching LSRW skills, individual evaluation

### INTRODUCTION

English, as we are aware of it, is an international language, it is a window of the World. It is an official language both in India and many world Countries. After Globalization, it has become more important medium of Communication of the world. Keeping the importance of this subject in mind, it is being chosen by the majority of learners.

- English language affords better job prospects throughout the world.
- English is a sine qua non in the wealth creating industries of information technology and information technology enabled services.

- It is the official communication in Olympic sports, air traffic and maritime control.
- All the worlds major scientific Journals are published in English.
- English is the lingua franca among nations and promotes Economic and social growth.
- It offers innumerable opportunities for advancement in the field of scientific and social growth

In view of the growing importance of English subject, which is being known by the rural parents through Electronic and Print media, even the down trodden, socially and Economically

backward families are showing much enthusiasm to provide their Children English education. As the parents do not have enough faith in the English Medium Government schools, the parents of rural area are sending their children to private schools imparting English education, paying huge school fees. This trend has resulted in the falling of strength in the Government schools and a proportionate rise in the strength of Private schools. This has in turn resulted in substantially larger class rooms in the Private schools. Therefore English teaching in large classrooms has become a cause of concern, of late.

English learners are to be trained in four skills of LSRW ( Learning, Speaking, Reading and Writing ). The Primary Objective of teaching English is to cultivate the required habit of listening and understanding the language. English language teachers should make efforts to cultivate interest among the students. Therefore the teachers has to take individual care, by doing case study.

It is time consuming so that teaching English is difficult in Larger Class rooms.

**I. Listening :** To understand how the teacher could face difficulty teaching the activity of listening which helps children, one of the many activities ( From 3<sup>rd</sup> Standard class activity work book). There will be a volley ball: The teacher is instructed to teach it in three periods of 45 minutes each. Generally 3 types of children will be seen in the classroom. They are above average, average and below average.

Teacher has to take individual care of each student : particularly, more care should be on below average students. Because they never show any interest to listen and disturb other students. Teacher has to show a volley ball and ask the students.

(1) What is this ?

First time teacher herself says answer: this is a ball  
Teacher does not expect any answer, so the question is repeatedly asked till the answer comes out of above average students; on the teacher's repetition, children answers.

(2)Is it a real ball ?

NO, it's a picture ball.

Again teacher asks the same question then students particularly above average students give answers. In the same way teacher should ask series of questions over the ball as follows.

(3) How is it ?

(Teacher finally says then students say )

(4) Have you ever seen this ball ? Is it in round shape?

( Teacher never gets any answer because question will be strange to students and so they never understand it is, so that the teacher explains it in their mother tongue.)

(5) What is it ? showing a cricket ball.

Student : That is a Cricket ball

( Teacher comparing two balls)

Which ball is bigger to which ?

Student : Volley ball is bigger to Cricket ball.

Which is Smaller to which ?

Cricket ball is Smaller to Volley ball.

(6) How is the Cricket ball ?

The students answers varied; One said that it is in round shape. Another said that it is smaller and yet another said that it is good.

Therefore more and more questions were asked by the researcher regarding their colors, shapes and their functions etc.

To teach listening skills, which is never separated from learning, the teacher has to ask all these questions to all the students. Hence this practice proved a hard nut to crack because it consumed more time, as it is a large classroom.

**II. Reading :** Reading is a very important activity; it is not a passive one. The habit of reading should be developed among the students from the very beginning. The earliest stage of reading is the pre-reading stage. In it the mechanics of reading get mastered. Pupils already read in one language, that is their mother tongue. It should be more properly taught to improve proficiency in that language. This is because studies show that where reading abilities are well developed in one's first language, they can provide strong support for reading in second.

Unfortunately, most of the students particularly, studying in Government School hailing mostly from rural and impoverished families are illiterate or semi literate where reading atmosphere is either unavailable or less available.

Consequently, the English language teacher has to face many challenges to handle English language at Primary level.

The key lies making them learn reading, about transfer of skills and abilities from the known language to the unknown.

The teacher asks the students to look at the picture of an ant and also the phrase "an ant" say the phrase. Students listen and say it linking the visual one with written form of the word. Then the picture is removed and each student should be asked to read the Printed word. Flash cards become very useful for students activity in which they match the picture with correct phrase. To organize this the teacher of English can follow his own method of teaching reading. Any how, the teacher has to follow some important methods of teaching reading skills. They are :

- The Alphabet method
- The Phonic method
- The Word method
- The Phrase method
- The Sentence method
- The Story method etc., Pg.91,92,93 (Methods of Teaching English by Dr.Shaikh Mowla)

**The Alphabet method:** This is also known as spelling method or letter method. The students are taught in this method. The students are taught in this method to read words, like C-A-T Cat, H-E-A-D Head etc., This method may help students in learning the spellings also thoroughly.

**The Phonic method:** Students are helped to read sets of words, that contain the same vowel sound, namely a cat, a rat, a bed, a net a log, a dog, a top, a pot, or a cup, a bus, a gun, a house, a mouse, or a chain, a bear, a hare etc.

While handling these methods to make learn reading among the students in larger classroom. I observed many unwanted or undesirable habits of students. Some of the students did not show enough interest to listen during teaching and they were busy doing other activities; and even if they tried to listen their concentration spans were found wanting; Lack of

interest was found to be the prime reason behind this.

To improve the situation, the teacher has to give individual care and follow more effective motivational skills. She has to do the duty of a good mentor sparing time to each and every such student. Though it is time consuming, it should be done to justify the classroom teaching. Otherwise, we can never expect any reading skills from the students.

Thus, teaching English in larger Classrooms, sparing time to each and every student is indeed a hard work.

**III. Speaking :** Language is primarily Speech. English is spoken by many people of the world. So it is called as international language. Now –a-days it has become pivotal in the world job market. No other language has become as crucial as English in our India. Therefore all the parents have been concentrating more on English Education of late and their main desire is to see their children speak English . It is extremely unhappy to say that most of the Class – I bureaucrats are also hesitating to communicate their ideas freely in English language. That is why, they are spending thousands of rupees to improve their kids English proficiency. Cashing in on this demand, many English language coaching institutes are being set up. However, they are failing to meet the aspirations of their ambitious parents.

Having many reasons behind it, one of the main reasons for the hesitation of speaking in English is no confidence. Our Indian society is orthodox & conservative and it has been jealous based, and our people may find faults from English learners.

English is still the language of elite people. Many people who want to speak the language are unable to do so as they fear ridicule. This fear has to be ridden from the minds of the students, by giving them due time to speak in the class room. But, we have faced a lot of problem in giving each student due time to speak as the classroom was large.

- Speech is important for the practical use of English
- Learning through speech is the natural way of learning language.

Actually, out of four language learning skills, listening and speaking are taught and learnt in quick succession, but it is not happening practically, because the atmosphere required to speak in English is not prevailing. Sadly, even the teachers are unable to create that atmosphere even in the English classroom.

To improve spoken skills among the students, the teacher can introduce the language items i.e structural words / Sentences patterns and vocabulary items, orally in meaningful situations. Oral presentation of the language items by the teacher is followed immediately by speaking by students.

- Teacher should encourage students to speak as early as possible.
- Teacher Should encourage to speak lengthy sentences.
- We should encourage them to speak right from the first day.
- We should let them speak actively with whatever English they know.

The teacher should take initiation to give due time to each student to make participate in simple dialogues/ conversations given in the English work books at primary level. These should be converted into real situations in the classroom.

For example:

Teacher (Pointing to a picture or to a pupil standing in front of the class), asks 'What is in his hand?'

Pupil A: a book.

Other pupils individually: a book

The teacher says 'a book'... 'It's a book'... 'a book' ... 'It's a book' and asks the class to repeat it after her. (Teaching and Learning English by ML Tickoo)

**IV. Writing** : The skill of writing occupies an important place in school teaching as English is taught as compulsory subject. Our students are not only examined orally, but through writing, writing helps us to articulate our thoughts and events systematically.

The ability to write English implies mastering the mechanics of writing and using appropriate vocabulary and sentences with correct spelling and writing in a legible manner.

The students should

- Master the mechanics of writing.
- Use the Capital letter and punctuation marks correctly.
- Spell the work correctly.
- Write neatly and legibly with reasonable speed
- Use appropriate words and sentence patterns.

Following writing activities are to be introduced to the students on the basis of their learning & writing levels.

Class I and II : Copy a sentence or short passage exactly as it is written. This helps beginning – level students who are not very familiar with the language.

Class III and IV: Students receive a paragraph or two that has blank spaces in the text. The students write the word or phrase that completes the sentence. Class – V students write on their own but perhaps they receive paragraphs prompts or are allowed to look in a book.

**Cultivation of writing skills:** For better cultivation of writing skills among the students the teacher has to take a lot of strain; she has to correct the class notes of each and every student before the student itself.

Sometimes, the teachers do mere signature, which is not enough . The teacher, while correcting the class notes of each student, should advice him not to repeat the same mistakes, spotted by the teacher. Also, the student should be explained why it is a mistake and give him further examples.

It is observed that correcting the class notes of each and every student before himself/herself, explaining their mistakes consumed a lot of invaluable class time.

#### Conclusion

Teaching English language is no mean task. The students need to be imparted the four essential skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. After teaching, they need to be evaluated individually to ascertain how far they have picked up the ropes of the language. This process becomes

extremely cumbersome and poses many practical difficulties in a large class room.

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